

SB 994 – Ban Leghold and Body-Crushing Traps in Connecticut

My name is Karen Marrotte. My husband and I were licensed wildlife rehabilitators from 1986 through to 2000/2001. We called our property in Washington, CT "Sanctuary Wildlife Rehabilitation".

One Saturday morning, I received a call from a State Trooper that found a young raccoon with its front leg caught in a leghold trap. He asked if I would take it, which I did and the Trooper drove the raccoon to our house. The trap had already cut through the skin and the Trooper was very careful not to let the trap hang off the leg and do more damage.

We worked on the trap inside of our raccoon cage so if the raccoon got away from us, he would still be confined. Both the Trooper and I tried to release the trap with no avail. Finally the Trooper raised his leg and stomped on the release. The look on the raccoon's face was in horror and I will never forget it. I kept telling the raccoon that it as OK all the time praying that the Trooper's foot would not slip off of the release and do more damage to the leg. On the fourth try, the trap sprung open and the leg was freed. The trap had cut through the skin and the skin was pushed down toward the paw revealing all the muscles in the leg. Luckily the Trooper had arrived early in the day and there was still time to get the raccoon to the vets. The leg did heal and the raccoon was eventually released.

These traps were developed many, many years ago when Connecticut was rural and people hunted for the fur trade. Today, Connecticut is very developed. More and more houses are being built every year. In my neighborhood, we have many "weekend" residents that bought homes here to get away from the cities and enjoy nature and the quiet surroundings. After seeing what this raccoon went through, I hope that a person or a child never steps on one of these traps. I believe there is no longer a need for cruel traps like these and I am asking that SB 994 be approved and will ban body-crushing and leghold traps in Connecticut forever.

As a final comment I would like to quote Gandhi, "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated".

Thank you for this opportunity.

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